

THE BUNNIKINS-BUNNIES IN EUROPE



BY EDITH B. DAVIDSON

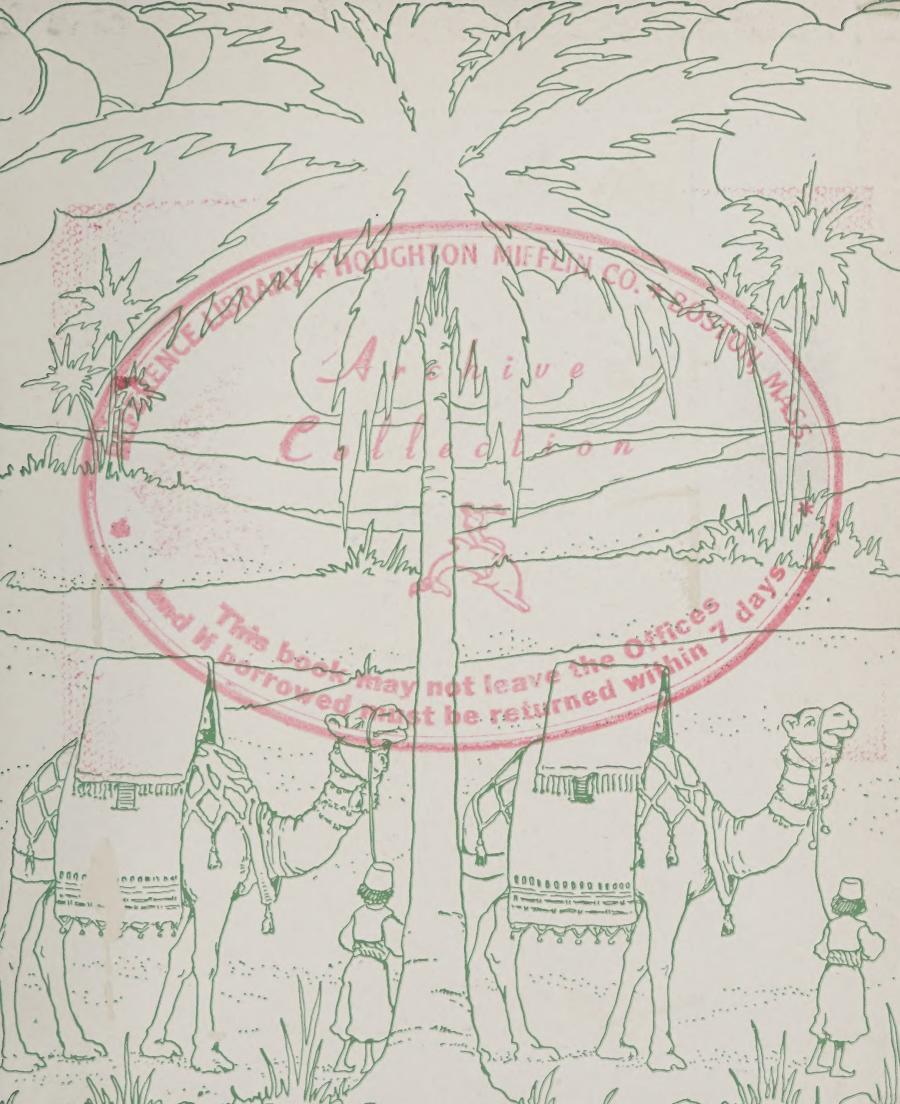
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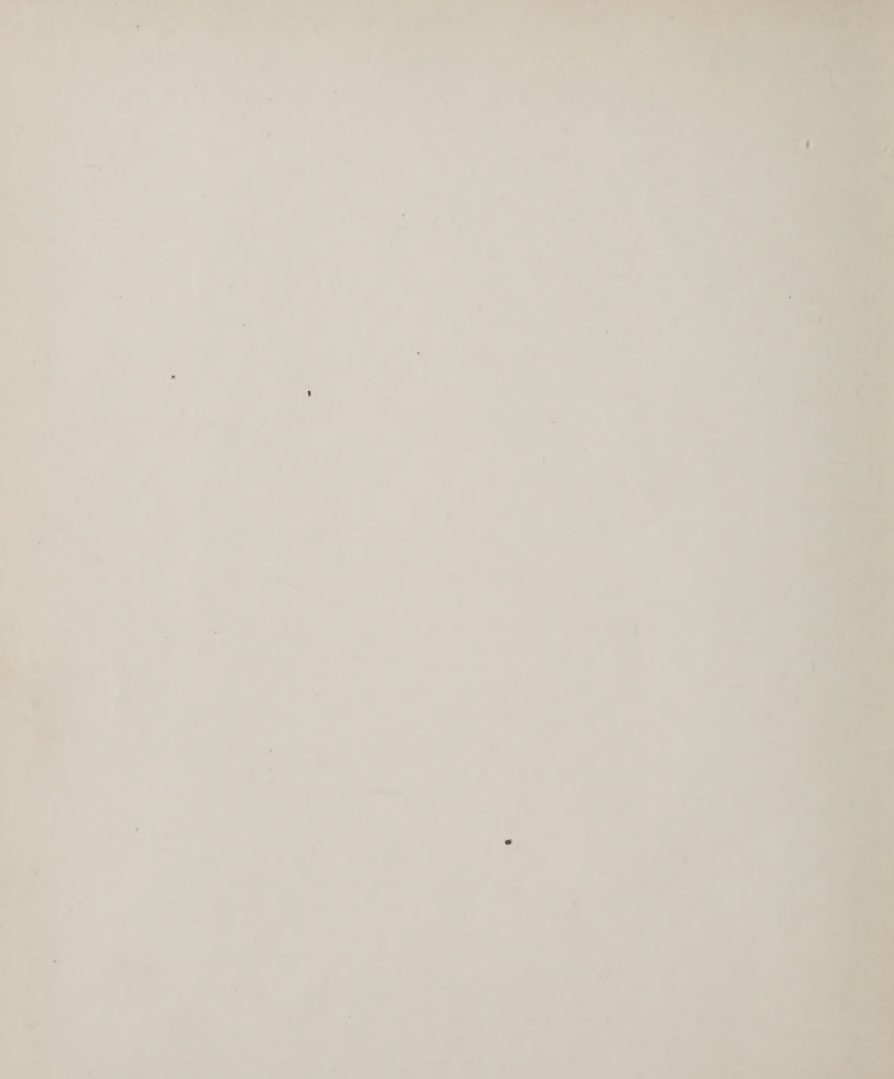
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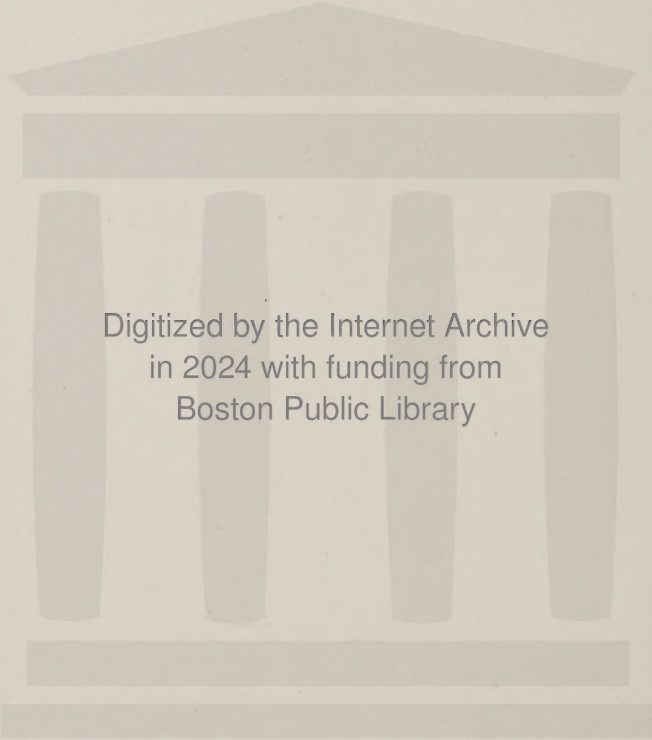
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By

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Pictures by

CLARA E. ATWOOD



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TO BARBARA

FOR WHOM IT WAS
WRITTEN THIS LITTLE
STORY IS LOVINGLY
DEDICATED BY
HER TANTA





ONE pleasant spring day, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny went to call on his dear friend, Mr. Gray-Squirrel. The weather was growing warm, and Mr. Bunnikins wanted to talk over plans for the summer.

He put on his new spring suit, a lovely pair of blue and white silk socks, and a very fine hat, trimmed with scarlet poppies and white daisies.

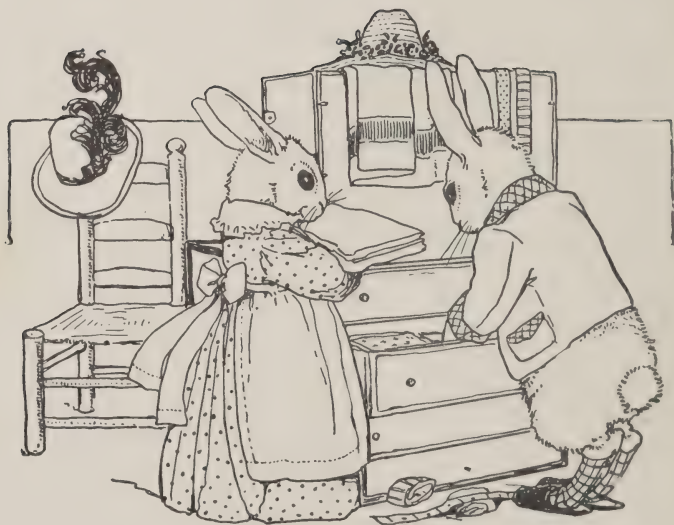
After kissing Rosamund good-by,
and warning Bobtail to be a good boy
and mind his mother, he trotted off
through the shady woods in high spirits.



He found Mr. and Mrs. Gray-Squirrel at home, very busily talking about a trip to Europe for the summer, and much pleased to see Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, as they wished to ask him and his family to go with them.

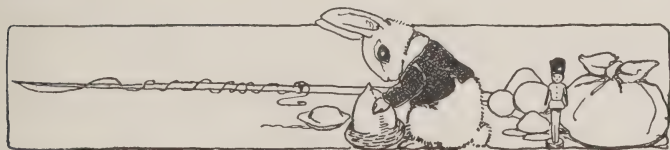
“Just the thing to do,” said Mr. Bunnikins. “Only give me time to get my automobile ready, buy a few new hats, and some traveling clothes, and off we’ll all go.”

So, after drinking a glass of honeyade, and eating a roly-poly of carrots and parsley, he said good-by to Mr. and Mrs. Gray-Squirrel, and went home to tell the family all about it.



Mrs. Bunnikins and the children were delighted to go to Europe, and Bobtail at once began to pack all the treasures he wished to take with him.

As for Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, who was more particular than ever about his clothes, he bought so many new hats, sweaters, neck-ties, and socks, that Mrs. Bunnikins finally had to get him a bureau-trunk, full of nice little drawers, where Bunnikins could see all his beautiful things, without upsetting the packing.



Of course he had to take his silk hammock, without which he was never quite happy, and Miss Red-Squirrel knitted for him, as a good-by present, a lovely blue and white afghan to keep his toes warm on the steamer.

Finally, with a hurry and a skurry, the last trunk was locked, and they all went on board the big steamer, which was to carry them across the ocean to Europe.



MRS. GRAY-SQUIRREL was not a good sailor, so she did not appear during the voyage, and poor little Mrs. Bunnikins-Bunny was so tired out with all Mr. Bunnikins's packing, that she only wanted to rest.

The children were delighted with the little cabins, and they all wanted to sleep in the upper berths. The first night, however, Bobtail was restless, and when the ship suddenly gave a lurch, out he rolled with a terrified squeal almost on top of

his father, who was sleeping on the sofa. After that, both he and Rosamund were put in the lower berth, and safely tucked in every night.

For the first day or two the sea was very smooth. Then one morning Mrs. Bunny was awakened by a dismal sound.

“What is the matter, my dear?” she



asked her husband.

“Oh my! oh my!” groaned poor Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny. “Why did I ever leave my peaceful home to cross the stormy sea? I feel as though my tummy had gone either up into my head, or down into my feet, I am not sure which; but I feel very, very ill, and I think I’m going to die.”

“Oh no,” said gentle Mrs. Bunny, “people do not die of sea-sickness. Drink a little chicken broth, and eat a bit of celery, and you’ll feel much better.”

But Mr. Bunnikins could not be comforted, and for two whole days he lay, rolled up in his blue and white afghan,



with his eyes shut, moaning and groaning. Then he got up very suddenly and unexpectedly.

The Bunny and the Squirrel children had a little cabin, close by, to play in, when they did not want to go on deck. One day, when they were wondering what they should do, Bobtail suggested that fishing would be great fun. He had brought a hook and line among his treasures, so, the port-hole being open, he stood up on the window-ledge, and threw the line into the water, the hook well baited with a nice pink gum-drop.

For a while nothing happened, not even the tiniest nibble; so Bobtail slipped

the line about his neck, and turning round, began to play with Ruddy Squirrel. Suddenly there came a most tremendous jerk on the line, and with a fearful yell, Bobtail was pulled through the port-hole, head first.



Ruddy Squirrel grabbed him by his hind leg just in time to save him. Rosamund Bunny held on tightly to Ruddy's bushy tail, while little Chippy clung squeaking to Rosamund's skirt. Then

they shouted for help with all their might and main.

Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny forgot that he was sea-sick, and jumping from his berth, he ran as fast as he could across the passage-way with Mr. Gray-Squirrel. They got there just as all the children were being pulled through the port-hole.

When Bobtail was at last dragged back, he still had the fishing-line round his neck, and on the end was a *huge cod-fish!*



Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny did not consider, however, that the cod-fish repaid him for his bad fright, and I am afraid that he boxed Bobtail's ears. But he was not sea-sick any more, and for the rest of the voyage, he ate six square meals a day, besides a round one before he got up in the morning.

Bobtail was forbidden to even look out of a port-hole, and his hook and line were hidden by his father until they were safely on land again.



IT was a lovely day when the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels landed in Liverpool. Mr. Bunnikins had dressed up in a beautiful new traveling suit, and wore a most gorgeous hat trimmed with all sorts of flowers and feathers. He was in high spirits, and had quite forgotten how dreadfully seasick and miserable he had been.

The automobile had been shipped some time before; so when the Bunnies and the Squirrels stepped on shore the first thing they saw was Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny's fine machine all ready to start.





Mr. Bunnikins had hired a French chauffeur, Monsieur L'Oiseau, a very clever bird, who knew the whole country of England and also of France. If he was puzzled about a road, he would fly up into a tree, where he could see the way for miles ahead.

The Bunnies and the Squirrels had rather a hard time making him understand, as none of them could speak a word of French. Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, however, used to make queer

faces and signs, and also whistle, so that L'Oiseau seemed to understand him quite well.

As they were all very anxious to get to Paris, they did not stay long in England, but soon crossed the Channel to France.

On the steamer poor Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny was very sea-sick, and while he was leaning unhappily against the ship's rail, gazing at the waves, his pet hat fell overboard, and was lost. Mrs. Bunny had told him to tie the ribbons tightly under his chin, as a high wind was blowing; but when he felt so miserable he had loosened the bow, and off the lovely hat went into the water.



In Paris they met Peter Bruin, whom they had known very well up in the mountains at the house of his father, Mr. Brown Bruin.



He was a very nice young bear, and most kind to the Bunny and Squirrel children, taking them to see all sorts of strange and interesting things.

Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny was so fascinated by all the lovely French hats which he saw, that he bought twelve of them in two days, and Mrs. Bunny had hard work to keep him from buying twice as many.



ONE fine day, the Bunny and the Squirrel children went to play in a pretty park. They were not often allowed to go out without some older person, but Bobtail and Ruddy promised to take the best of care of Rosamund and Chippy, and off they all went.

Mr. Bunnikins had a bad tooth-ache, so Mrs. Bunny had tied up his poor head in a warm shawl, and he was trying to take a little nap.



Suddenly Bobtail and Ruddy, closely followed by little Chippy, rushed into the room, squeaking and crying.

“What is the matter?” said Mrs. Bunnikins.

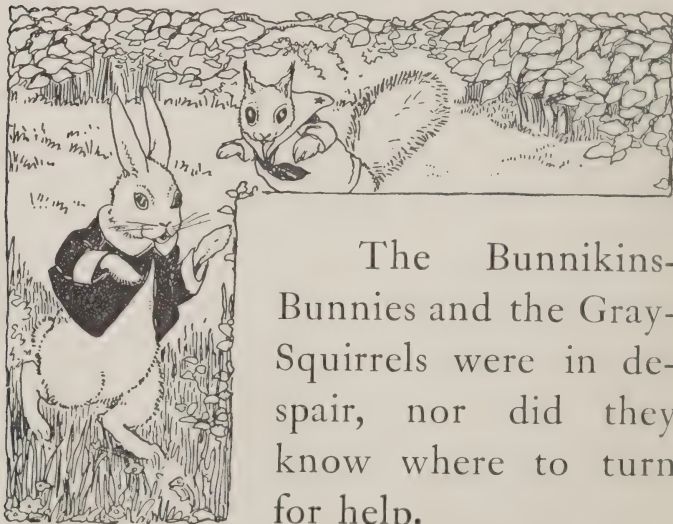
“*Where* is my little Rosamund?” shouted Mr. Bunnikins, throwing the shawl off his head, and quite forgetting his tooth-ache.

“*Gone!*” cried the children. “Stolen by a most terrible man!”

They had been playing quietly in the park, when a dark ugly-looking man with a fierce, snappy dog had appeared. Without saying a word, he had grabbed little Rosamund, and then had tried to catch them.



He had chased them a long way, and they had expected every minute to be eaten up by the frightful dog. As it was, Bobtail had a bad bite in one ear, and Ruddy had lost a piece of his bushy tail.



The Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels were in despair, nor did they know where to turn for help.

Mr. Bunnikins was beside himself with grief and anxiety, and could neither eat nor sleep.

Finally, L'Oiseau, the chauffeur, took them to consult a friend of his, a wonderful Jackdaw, who could find anything that was lost.

After listening carefully to their story, the Jackdaw cocked his head knowingly on one side, and said: "Go East or West as seemeth best, but in the end you'll find her." That is all that he would say, ex-





cepting "Gypsies!" and "Circus!" It was decided that Mrs. Gray-Squirrel, Ruddy, and Chippy should stay in Paris with Mrs. Bunnikins-Bunny, while Mr. Bunnikins, Bobtail, and Mr. Gray-Squirrel went in the automobile with L'Oiseau to search for Rosamund.

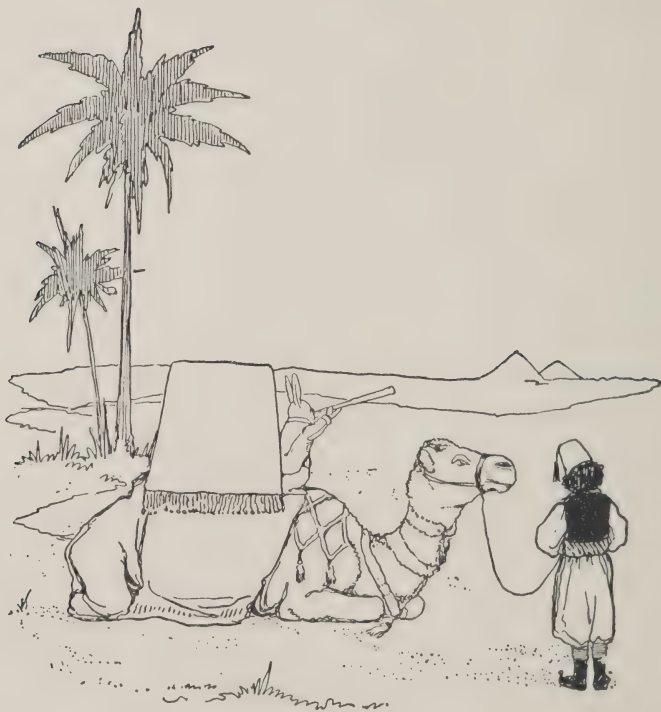
First they went East as far as Egypt, hunting everywhere for gypsies. In Cairo they heard of a band of these wandering people, who had just gone to the Great Desert, so Mr. Bunnikins decided to follow them.

He hired a queer-looking little guide called Hafiz Ben Ali, to whom Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny took a great fancy on ac-

count of his wearing a small red hat on the side of his head, night and day, and on camel back they started across the Desert.



MR. GRAY-SQUIRREL quite enjoyed the novelty of the journey, but Mr. Bunni-kins, who loved all the comforts of home, simply hated it. He could not sleep in his nice silk hammock, because there were no trees on which to hang it, and the motion of riding on a camel made him sea-sick.



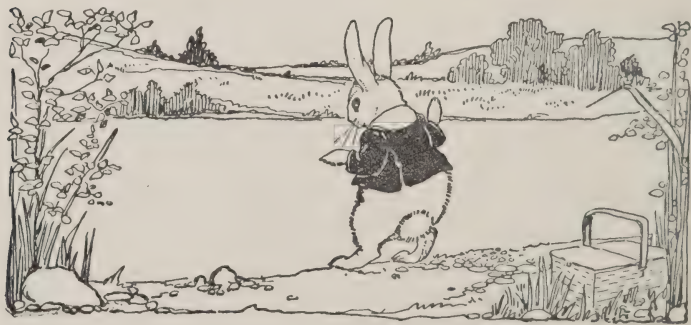
For several days they found nothing in the Desert excepting large sand-flies, which got into the unhappy Mr. Bunnikins's long soft ears, and nearly drove him crazy. How he longed for a quiet mossy bank, and his blue and white afghan!

At last Hafiz told him that there was a party of gypsies just ahead, and they soon overtook them. To Mr. Bunnikins - Bunny's great disappointment, they were quiet, peaceful people who had gone into the Desert to hunt for monkeys, and had never seen nor heard of little Rosamund.

Having gone East, Mr. Bunnikins-

Bunny now decided they had better go West. So they said good-by to Hafiz Ben Ali and his little red hat, and started off West as fast as the automobile would carry them, still hunting for gypsies and circuses.

One very warm day, Bobtail begged to be allowed to go paddling in a pretty little river, near which they had eaten their luncheon.





Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny was not fond of wetting his toe-toes, but he consented to stand on the river-bank while Bobtail waded in. Suddenly the river deepened, and Bobtail, losing his footing, fell into the water heels over head, so that all his father could see of him was his wisp of a white tail.





Poor Mr. Bunnikins was frightened out of his wits. Neither he nor Mr. Gray-Squirrel could swim, so they both ran up and down in the shallow water shouting "Help! Help!"

All at once the funniest mite of a little man appeared. He had very big ears, pop-eyes, a broad smile which stretched way across his face, and a pair of such bandy-legs that you could scarcely tell which way he was walking. He seized the branch of a tree, which lay near by, rushed into the river, and in the twinkling of an eye he had fished Bobtail out, and pulled him safely ashore.

With tears in his eyes, Mr. Bunni-kins-Bunny thanked the Bandy-Legged Man, and invited him to come to supper that evening. Then he ran Bobtail back to the hotel, and put him to bed covered up with so many blankets that the poor bunny was nearly roasted.



WHEN Mr. Bandy-Legs came to supper, Mr. Bunnikins told him all his troubles and asked his advice.

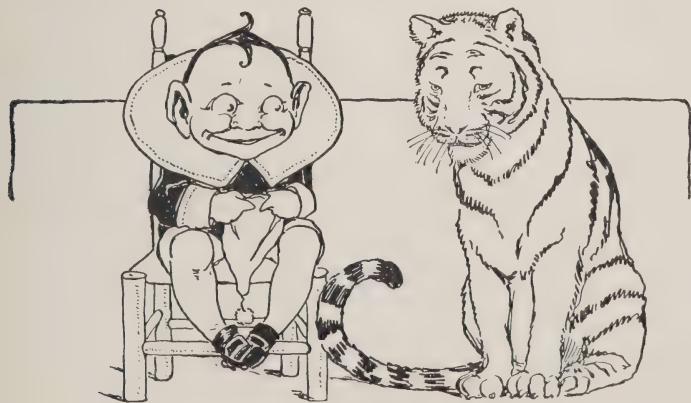
“I should certainly try Spain,” said Mr. Bandy-Legs, “for I’m told that nearly all the gypsies come from there. In fact, if you don’t object, and as I speak Spanish, I’d like to go along too, and try to help you.”

“I should be delighted to have you,” answered Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, “and the sooner we go the better; only please don’t go by sea, for I don’t like ships, as I’m always sea-sick.”

As the nearest way to Spain was across the sea, and as Mr. Bunnikins utterly refused to go by steamer, Mr. Bandy-Legs made a suggestion. He had a friend, Captain Tiger, a gentleman of very high birth, but rather fearsome to look upon. At times, however, he could be as gentle as a lamb, and he owned a wonderful flying-machine. Perhaps he might be persuaded to carry them over to Spain, if they did not object to his fierce looks.

“All right,” said brave Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, “trot out your flying friend, and let’s have a look at him.”

The next day Captain Tiger came to call with Mr. Bandy-Legs, and the Bunnikins and Mr. Gray-Squirrel were quite fascinated by him, as he happened to be in a most amiable mood.



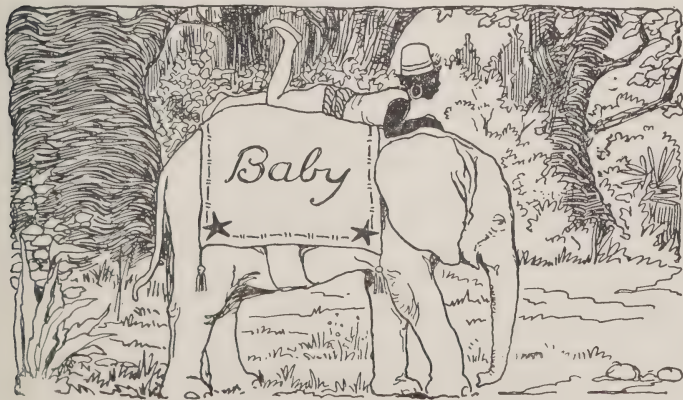
He offered to carry them across the sea to Spain, as soon as he could get his flying-machine in good running order, so in spite of his fierce looks and hasty temper, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny and Mr. Gray-Squirrel decided to go.

L'Oiseau was sent back to Paris with the automobile, and shortly after, Captain Tiger was ready to start. They traveled day and night, for the fearsome tiger never seemed tired or hungry, and at the end of a week he landed them safely in a green meadow, close to a pretty wood.

Captain Tiger ate a large dinner, took a long nap, and then, with a yawn which

showed all his sharp teeth, he said good-by, and had soon flown out of sight.

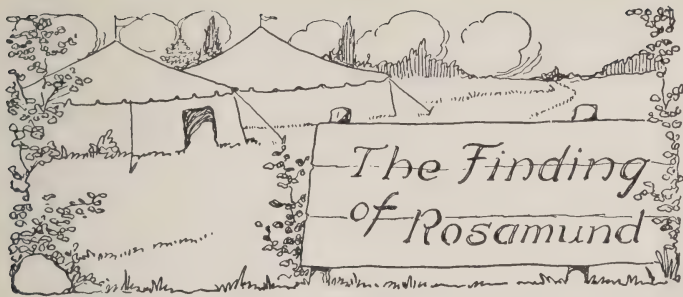
Mr. Bunny and Bobtail were nibbling clover blossoms, while Mr. Gray-Squirrel and Mr. Bandy-Legs were busily cracking Spanish chestnuts, when a Baby Elephant trotted out of the woods with a small Coon-Monkey-Boy on his back.



In his best Spanish, Mr. Bandy-Legs politely asked them if they had seen any gypsies or circuses in that part of the country.

They told him that in the village close by there was a very fine circus, to which they both belonged, but that they had not seen any gypsies.

“Thank you,” said Mr. Bandy-Legs, “we shall certainly go and see your show.”



As soon as they had eaten their dinner, Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, Mr. Gray-Squirrel, Mr. Bandy-Legs, and Bobtail all started out to see the circus. They found it in such a big tent that they were half afraid to venture in for fear of getting lost.

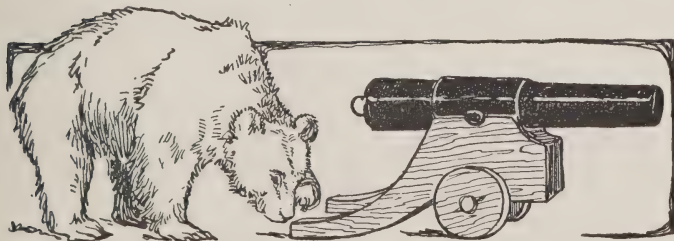
Just as they arrived the Baby Elephant came into the circus ring carrying a flag with "Welcome" on it, while the Coon-

Monkey-Boy turned somersaults on its back, and whistled Yankee-Doodle.



Close behind the Elephant, the Bunnikins and Mr. Gray-Squirrel were astonished to see their friend Peter Bruin, whom they had left in Paris, walking around the ring on his head. He also rode on horseback, and fired off a cannon, but he did not look as though he enjoyed doing it, and Mr. Bunnikins and Mr. Gray-Squirrel could not imagine why he was there.

There were pony races with little



Coon-Monkey-Boys as riders, and performing pigs which amused Bobtail immensely.

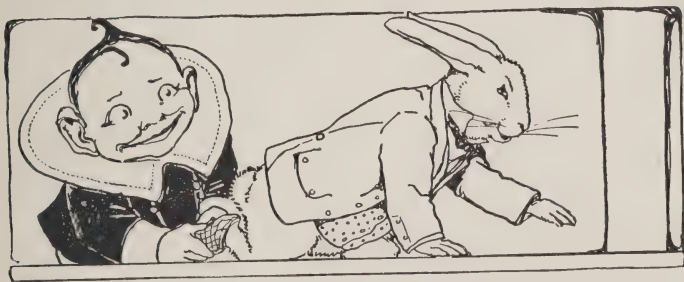
There was a learned Parrot, who talked in seven languages all at the same time, much to the bewilderment of Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny, and two Chipmunks, who did tricks on the trapeze, and danced a heel and toe polka, which Mr. Gray-Squirrel did not like at all.

Finally the sand was raked over, and a little stand was brought in and set up. A moment after, the dearest little snow-white rabbit ran into the ring and was lifted up on to the stand. A hoop was given to her to hold, through which a



pack of small dogs jumped.

One look was enough for Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny to recognize his darling little Rosamund. With a squeak of delight, he tried to jump down into the ring, and was only prevented by Mr.



Bandy-Legs, who held him tightly by his hind leg, and told him that if he went where the dogs were, they would surely tear him to pieces.



As soon as the show was over, they hurried off as fast as they could to find the owner of the circus. After hunting for some time, they came upon him, drinking beer and comfortably smoking his pipe in one of the small tents.

He was a big, jolly-looking Dutchman, with a fat red face, and a merry twinkle in his eye, and he seemed much amused at Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny's fine clothes and feathered hat.

He listened quietly to Mr. Bunnikins's story, and then, taking his pipe out of his mouth, and scratching his head thoughtfully, he said :

“Vell, I gif a goot pig priz for dot

leedle rappit. She iss a lofely leedle pet, und I cry to loose her, put I don kip no stolen goots. Ven you vass her fader, joost you took her away vid you.”

Mr. Bunnikins was very grateful to the kind-hearted Dutchman, but he insisted on giving him back the full amount of money which he had paid the gypsies for Rosamund.

When, a few moments later, the Dutchman brought little Rosamund to her father, poor Mr. Bunnikins quite broke down, and cried with joy.



LITTLE Rosamund was prettier than ever, but she had grown quite thin from home-sickness, and was very timid. How happy she was to see her father and Bobtail, and dear "Uncle Gray-Squirrel"! She held tightly to her father's paw, and never let go of it, until they were safely on their way to Paris.

Bobtail and Mr. Bandy-Legs were so

wild with excitement, that they capered about until Mr. Bandy-Legs got so tangled up that he had to sit down and untwist his legs.

Just then, who should come in but



Peter Bruin, who was delighted to see the Bun-nikins-Bunnies and Mr. Gray-Squirrel. He told them how he had joined the circus just for fun, but that he did not like it at all, and simply hated walking on his head, with his heels in the air.

He had been most

anxious to take Rosamund back to her family, but unluckily all his money had been stolen, so he could not buy her from the Dutchman. He had, however, done everything that he could to make her happy, and Rosamund loved him dearly.

“You had better come back to Paris with us,” said Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny; “we are starting at once.”

“All right,” replied Peter Bruin, “that will suit me, and I’ll *never* stand on my head again.”

Mr. Bandy-Legs, however, decided that he would rather stay with the circus, so that he could play with the Baby Ele-

phant. They all felt sorry to leave him behind, but they made him promise to come soon to America, and visit them.

Two days later they arrived in Paris, where Mrs. Bunnikins-Bunny, Mrs. Gray-Squirrel, Ruddy, and Chippy welcomed them with open arms.



“Let’s pack up and go home by the next steamer,” said Mr. Bunnikins. “Paris may be very beautiful, but it is too dangerous for rabbits and squirrels;

America is the place for us.”

Mr. Gray-Squirrel felt that he had traveled enough for one summer, so they packed their trunks, bandboxes, bags, and automobile, said good-by to Monsieur L'Oiseau, and away they sailed.

The sea was so smooth that even Mr. Bunnikins-Bunny enjoyed it, and by the end of a week they were all safely home again. Autumn had come, and the woods were gay with crimson leaves, and full of ripe nuts. Even the birds had waited to welcome the Bunnikins-Bunnies and the Gray-Squirrels before flying Southward.

After supper, the first evening, when the children were tucked up in bed, and Mr. Bunnikins was sitting in his big arm-chair, toasting his toes before the fire, he gave a sigh of contentment, and turning to Mrs. Bunny, he said:

“Well, I have had enough of travelling, and I *never* want to leave my cosy nest again.”

His little wife smiled, and laying her paw affectionately on his shoulder, she replied:

“Wait until the next time, my dear.”

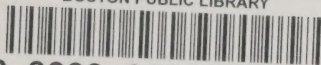


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